

looking for moral and academic support, he turns to an unheard-of professor from Yale to quote. He uses that professor as a source to say: Don't worry. Just because we took away the freedom of women when it comes to their reproductive health, we are not going to go so far as to address any decisions on contraception, family planning, and the like.

Well, I might recommend to the Senator from Kentucky that he read the decision in *Dobbs* overturning *Roe v. Wade* and the concurring opinion from Justice Clarence Thomas, which said specifically that very thing. Now, he said, that we have done *Roe v. Wade*, it is time to look at cases that address the issue of privacy, the issue of same-sex marriage, and the issues of contraception, explicitly using those words.

So to suggest that some Yale professor should be trusted more than this Justice on the Court who has given us fair warning is hard to understand.

#### PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Madam President, there is also this talk about the Democrats in favor of a tax hike. Let me put this in perspective. The Democrats are trying to achieve something that the vast majority of the American people want desperately: Find a way to control the spiraling cost of prescription drugs.

I can't think of a single issue more popular with the American people—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—and so the Senators have been working on it. Senator SHAHEEN, Senator SCHUMER, Senator MANCHIN, and others have been discussing ways to reduce the cost of insulin to no more than \$35 a month. Wouldn't that be a break for the millions of diabetic Americans who many times have to cut the amount of insulin that they use because they can't afford it, to have affordable, lifesaving medicine? Isn't that something we all should applaud? And doesn't it reduce costs overall for us to bring down the spiraling cost of prescription drugs?

The Senator from Kentucky talks a lot about the cost American families are facing. We know that is a fact. One of the first things they will identify is the cost of prescription drugs. We want to do something about it. The Senator from Kentucky has said no, he won't support this effort to corral in these costs of prescription drugs as long as there is an increase in taxes.

It turns out the increase in taxes were the Trump tax cuts for the wealthiest people in America. Yes, I think they ought to pay more in taxes, and if their paying more in taxes means that families pay less for prescription drugs, sign me up for it, and sign most Americans up for it. The notion of tax hikes on the wealthiest people in this country does not strike me as inflationary; it strikes me as common sense if it is then turning into lower prescription drug prices for American families.

#### HIGHLAND PARK SHOOTING

Madam President, on June 8, 15 days after their 10-year-old daughter Lexi

was murdered—murdered—at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, TX, Kimberly and Felix Rubio testified before the House Committee on Oversight and Reform.

In their testimony, Kimberly and Felix recalled the last time they ever saw their daughter. There was a school assembly. Lexi had received a Good Citizen Award and had been recognized for receiving straight A's. The family said: We are going to celebrate tonight. We are going to take the whole family out for ice cream, her parents told her. She was overjoyed. Then they said goodbye and sent her off to the classroom.

Less than an hour later, in Uvalde, TX, an 18-year-old man armed with a military-style assault rifle stormed into Lexi's fourth grade classroom and shot and killed her and 18 of her classmates, along with 2 teachers who tried their best to protect the kids. It was the deadliest school shooting in America in the decade since Sandy Hook in Connecticut.

In her remarks to Congress, Lexi's mom Kimberly issued a prophetic warning. She said:

There's a mom listening to our testimony thinking, "I can't even imagine [the pain of this family]"—not knowing that our pain will one day be [her pain], unless we [do something] now.

That happened before our Fourth of July break, and I will have to tell you that there was an occurrence during that break, which I will never forget.

If I had to choose one town to take one of my kids or grandkids to for a Fourth of July parade, it would be Highland Park, IL. What a great little town it is. People really care in that town, and they care for one another. It is a beautiful little suburban community in Chicago. I happen to know the mayor, Nancy Rotering, personally, and I know how hard she works to make that a great town to live in.

Fourth of July was the day for their parade, and, as usual, thousands came out, carrying little American flags, proud of their country, wanting to celebrate not just America but Highland Park, that great community. Unfortunately, 1 week ago today, a young man armed with a military-style assault rifle climbed onto the roof of a building in Highland Park, IL, and, from his sniper's perch, opened fire on families gathered to watch the Fourth of July parade. Listen closely. He fired more than 80 rounds in less than a minute—80 rounds in less than a minute. He killed seven people and injured dozens more.

I called the mayor of Highland Park a couple hours after this happened. I was in Michigan on a family vacation and was on my way as quickly as I could drive back to Highland Park in my home State.

I reached Mayor Nancy Rotering and said: Can you tell me anything?

She said: It is horrible. It is terrible. We are still looking to find the shooter.

Can you imagine, she said they found a 2-year-old toddler wandering about,

covered in blood. Fortunately, that toddler, the little boy, hadn't been shot, but they were circulating photos of his face in the hopes that they could identify family members. They figured the worse—that little boy would be out alone because he had lost his parents.

Kevin and Irina McCarthy were among those victims on the Fourth of July. They went to the parade with that 2-year-old boy, whose name is Aiden. When the shooting started, Kevin placed his body over Aiden to protect him. He died protecting his son. His son's mother died right next to him.

Another parade-goer saw Aiden, his little legs smeared with his father's blood, and carried him to safety. The poor little boy could not even say his full name. They started searching for relatives and family. Aiden is now with his grandparents. He lost both his mom and dad at that parade.

Jacki Sundheim was a beloved preschool teacher at North Shore Congregation Israel. You should see the outpouring of letters talking about these people whose names I have mentioned here, how beloved they were in their community. Jacki was one of them.

Katie Goldstein went to the parade with her daughter Cassie. When the shooting started, Katie and her daughter starting running, but Katie was shot in the chest and fell. Cassie said she leaned over her dying mother and told her she loved her, but she couldn't stop running because the gunman was still shooting.

Stephen Strauss, what a story—a financial adviser who still worked full time at the age of 88 because he loved his work, and he loved life. He used to take the train in from Highland Park to downtown Chicago every single day. He and his wife Linda were 2 months shy of their 60th wedding anniversary.

Nicolas Toledo-Zaragosa came to Highland Park 2 years ago from Mexico to visit his family. He was in a wheelchair following a recent accident. He was shot in the chest and killed in that same wheelchair.

Eduardo Uvaldo was a father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He and his wife had just celebrated their 50th anniversary. The Fourth of July was Eduardo's favorite holiday. He couldn't wait to go to the parade. He was shot in the back of the head and died 2 days later in the hospital.

Now there is an additional story I want you to hear. It is about this little boy. Cooper Roberts was among the 46 parade-goers who were injured. He went to the parade with his twin brother Luke and his mom and dad. He is 8 years old. He loves playing baseball and soccer. His brother Luke suffered shrapnel wounds in his arm, and his mom Keely was shot in her leg and in her foot.

I want to read from an article in the Chicago Sun-Times that was printed just within the last 2 days to tell you what has happened to this little boy.

The bullet that hit [this little boy] Cooper Roberts in the mass shooting at Highland Park's Fourth of July parade tore a "very perilous" path through his small body.

You see, the military-assault weapon which was used by the shooter is not just another gun; it is a military-style weapon. Smith & Wesson, which makes the weapon, advertised it as an M&P weapon. I didn't know what that meant. Now I do—military and police weapon. The bullets that leave that gun, shot from that gun, travel at two to three times the velocity of an ordinary gun. When they hit the human body, they don't just pass through it; they shred the organs in the body on the way out the other side.

For poor little Cooper who was shot:

[I]t caught his liver and esophagus, severed his spinal cord and caused so much internal bleeding that doctors had to take extraordinary measures to save his life.

Despite the horrific injuries, his doctors said Sunday that Cooper's condition has been stabilized. He was scheduled for more surgery Monday at the University of Chicago's Comer Children's Hospital.

The family put out a written statement that said:

He is in a great deal of pain—physically and emotionally—especially as the family had to share with him the devastating news that he is paralyzed from the waist down.

Cooper's twin and "best friend" Luke also was wounded, struck by shrapnel in his leg. Their mother, Keely Roberts, was injured as well.

Seven people were killed and dozens were injured. . . . The bullet that struck Cooper entered his upper abdomen, just below his diaphragm, "not his chest as originally believed," according to the doctors, who said it damaged the left side of his liver, his esophagus and his abdominal aorta. That last injury—

To his aorta—

was so bad that the doctors had to replace a section of the large blood vessel with a "synthetic graft in adult size so he can grow into it."

A hole in his esophagus was sewn closed, and the portion of his liver hit by the gunshot was repaired. The surgery planned Monday was for more repairs on his esophagus.

Cooper's abdomen was temporarily kept open with a "specialized vacuum dressing" because of the "severity" of his wounds and the number of blood transfusions he underwent, according to his family.

They said the bullet exited his back, severing his spinal cord. While he is paralyzed from the waist down, [they report he] suffered no brain damage and has experienced no effect on his cognitive function.

He was able to breathe on his own and speak by Friday after being kept on a ventilator for four days. He remains in serious condition.

"The family wishes to acknowledge and thank the many, many people—emergency medics, police, fire department, nurses and doctors and both hospitals—who did" [such extraordinary work].

I read the details of this because I want those who are following this debate to hear them and take a look at this.

What did he do wrong? He went to the Fourth of July parade with his mom and dad. I am sure he was as happy as you see him in this picture. And because a man with a military-

style rifle went berserk and fired on his family, his life has changed forever.

Why? Why do we put up with this in this country? This break—Fourth of July break—will always be remembered by me as not just another recess from the Senate but a moment when my State was under attack from the madness that we have in this country when it comes to weapons under the Second Amendment.

The Senator from Kentucky said earlier we need originalists, we need textualists in the U.S. Senate. The Presiding Officer has heard that many times.

Stick with the words of the Constitution. Just go back and find out what they meant. Let me read the Second Amendment so there is no question what it says:

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

Do you think, in their wildest imagination, the Founding Fathers conceived of a weapon that could fire off 90 rounds in less than a minute? At a time when you are dealing with muskets and it took minutes to load the musket even if you were skilled, do you think they even had that in a concept they could imagine? I don't.

Originalism? Keep and bear arms? How did it come to the point now where that has been a rationalization for the sale of a military assault weapon? AR-15s are the generic class of these weapons, these military assault weapons. I set out on a journey to figure out just how many there were in America. I started asking. The honest answer is people don't know. Somewhere between 10 and 20 million—10 and 20 million military assault weapons already sold in America. The total number of firearms in this country: 400 million for a nation of 350 million people, more than 1 firearm for every living American. That is the point we have reached.

And if you want the right to bear a firearm for sport or hunting purposes, count me as supporting that effort. It is a tradition in my family in the Midwest and many, but I can tell you this; it is a tradition which was treated very, very sensibly. Guns—and they were possessed by most members of my family—were always under lock and key for fear that a child could get their hands on it.

What is happening now when these young people below the age of 21 are turning around and buying these weapons?

And let's take a look at what the industry is doing with these weapons because it tells us the story of what is happening. According to the Gun Violence Archive, the Highland Park parade shooting was the 309th mass shooting this year in America—309 already in 27 weeks, more than 11 mass shootings each week, more than 1 a day.

What is a mass shooting? When four people are injured or killed by gunfire.

And while mass shootings get the most headlines, they are far from the only shootings in America. At least 220 people were killed and close to 570 others were injured in shootings over the Fourth of July weekend, according to the Gun Violence Archive.

We have come to accept this as the reality of life in America. Other countries look at us and shake their heads: How can these great Americans, as smart as they are, let this situation spin out of control?

Thirty miles south of Highland Park on the Fourth of July in the city of Chicago, 10 people were killed, 62 injured by gun violence over that weekend.

Now, the new bipartisan gun law, which the President highlighted today at the White House, passed last month. It didn't go as far as many of us liked, but it will save lives. And it certainly doesn't violate any aspect of the Second Amendment. It is the most significant gun law we have considered and passed in 30 years.

So what do you think if I ask you the question: What are the symbols of American freedom and independence? What would you say? Oh, the Declaration of Independence? I agree. The Constitution and Bill of Rights? Certainly. The Emancipation Proclamation? I might include that. Fireworks and a Fourth of July parade?

Well, let me show you what the marketing giants in the shooting industry have identified:

"Engineered to the specs of freedom and independence."

The MMR tactical rifle, part of the same class of weapons used by the killer in Highland Park—this is what one gun manufacturer, Mossberg, wants you to believe is the epitome of American freedom and independence. This is an actual ad for an AR-15-style semiautomatic assault rifle shown here. And, incidentally, it has a high-capacity magazine.

The shooter in Highland Park had three of these high-capacity magazines and was able to fire 90 rounds because of it. Take a look at this advertisement from the same industry telling civilians, "Use what they use"—use the same guns that soldiers and marines use in combat but use them, sadly, in towns like Highland Park, IL, and Uvalde, TX.

This ad is from a company called Daniel Defense. One of their semiautomatic assault rifles was used to murder those 19 children in Uvalde, TX. Daniel Defense semiautomatic assault rifles were also found in the room of the killer who murdered—murdered—60 concertgoers and injured more than 400 others at the Harvest Music Festival in Las Vegas in 2017, the worst mass shooting in the history of the United States. But, with pride, they advertise these weapons.

These kinds of reckless ads for assault weapons didn't exist 30 years ago. That is when gun manufacturers looked into the future and saw a problem. They realized that Americans

weren't going out hunting like they used to or even sport shooting. So they had to create a new craving, a new appetite for a weapon. They needed to attract a new customer to new sorts of weapons. So they created ads like these, equating freedom and independence with these little killing machines.

It gets worse. Here is an ad for a new assault rifle that came out this year. The AR-15 is the weapon of choice, as I mentioned, for mass shootings. This is an ad for a JR-15, a junior AR-15. It is manufactured by Wee 1 Tactical. I am sorry to say it is an Illinois company. It is like an AR-15, but it is designed for kids—20 percent smaller and lighter. It is designed for children under the age of 18.

Look at the logos in this ad and look closely. They are the same logos that are imprinted on the weapon. They show these skulls of children with pacifiers in their mouths. You will find that same symbol on the gun that they sell.

Today, the tobacco companies are creating vaping products with flavors like cotton candy and gummy bears to hook kids on nicotine. This gun manufacturer uses cartoon skulls sucking on pacifiers to try to hook children on using military-style assault weapons. Those weapons belong not at towns like Highland Park but on the battlefield—not in our communities and certainly not in the hands of children.

Current Federal law affords the firearms industry broad and unjustifiable immunity from civil liability. What would you think if a major automobile manufacturer sold a car in this country and the brakes did not work? Should they be held liable? Few would question that. But if a gun manufacturer makes a gun that is inherently dangerous or negligently manufactured, that is dangerous in and of itself, the gun industry has bought immunity in the law at the Federal level so they cannot be sued for that dangerous product. Dangerous car? The manufacturer can be sued. Dangerous gun? No liability.

Current Federal law allows the firearm industry broad and unjustifiable immunity from civil liability, but that immunity is not unlimited. Firearms manufacturers do not have a license to recklessly peddle high-powered killing machines to those who should not have them. They should be held accountable, and, believe me, the Senate Judiciary Committee is going to look at that law.

These assault rifles, these weapons of war, are killing our kids and threatening our communities in Buffalo, Uvalde, Highland Park, and so many other places. The death tolls and the tragedies will continue to multiply until we act.

Madam President, I will close by saying today I saw our Governor, JB Pritzker, who came to the ceremony at the White House, together with Nancy Rotering, the mayor of Highland Park. I want to commend both of them for

their leadership, and I want to thank the first responders. One week ago, the night of the shooting, I finally made it to Highland Park and went through and thanked all of the first responders—the ATF agents who so quickly identified this rifle as belonging to the man who was ultimately charged. I say to my colleagues: Let's waste no time and put a director at ATF. We need him now more than ever.

And to all those who responded, gave up their Fourth of July and did what they were asked to do so many times, risked their own lives for the safety of others, our heartfelt thanks. We owe them everything. From the medical crews who turned around on an emergency basis and did such miraculous things for all the people who were injured, our thanks are there and will be forever.

But now it is our turn not just to praise those who showed courage but to show courage ourselves. Can we summon the courage to put an end to these military assault rifles and say that this is not part of any Second Amendment right in America; that these are killing weapons? Sadly, we have too many lost lives to show for it.

I will close with Cooper's picture again. This perfect little boy—8 years old—went to the Fourth of July parade to celebrate our country and be with his family, and his life will never be the same.

What are we going to do about it?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. DUCKWORTH). The Senator from Illinois.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 676.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Owen Edward Herrnstadt, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States for a term expiring January 20, 2025.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 676, Owen Edward Herrnstadt, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States for a term expiring January 20, 2025.

Mazie K. Hirono, Brian Schatz, Alex Padilla, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jack Reed, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Tammy Duckworth, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Chris Van Hollen, Catherine Cortez Masto, Gary C. Peters, Elizabeth Warren, Jacky Rosen, Ben Ray Lujan, Sherrod Brown, Tina Smith.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 908.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Kate Elizabeth Heinzelman, of New York, to be General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 908, Kate Elizabeth Heinzelman, of New York, to be General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Mazie K. Hirono, Brian Schatz, Tim Kaine, Richard J. Durbin, Margaret Wood Hassan, Tammy Duckworth, Patrick J. Leahy, Christopher A. Coons, Jacky Rosen, Tina Smith, Angus S. King, Jr., Martin Heinrich, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Alex Padilla, Christopher Murphy, Catherine Cortez Masto.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.